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RE: Lower Saxony has issued new measures for interaction with SARS-CoV-2 contacts

Social interaction with contact persons in the context of schools:

Event-related intensified testing (anlassbezogenes intensiviertes Testen=ABIT)

Background

To ensure that face-to-face learning in school for as many students as possible is continued, the quarantine orders for close contacts in the school setting can reduce the number of affected students without increasing the risk of infection.

These measures apply due to the increasing number of SARS-CoV-2 infections among students. The increase in numbers otherwise will result in a growing number of students forced into online learning due to their contacts with a SARS-CoV-2 positive person.

Instead of the previous quarantine rules for students, a test-based approach should therefore be applied in the contact person management, an "event-related intensified testing" (anlassbezogenes intensiviertes Testen=ABIT).

General conditions

All students continue taking three self-tests per week regularly.

An index person always goes into isolation according to the RKI dismissal criteria (usually at least 14 days, shortened to 5 days with PCR test. Possible only for asymptomatic, fully vaccinated people). This also implies that the previous quarantine obligation for direct contact persons (K1) no longer applies.

Self-tests for students, such as those used for routine testing, are also used in the ABIT measures.

The hygiene concept in school will continue to be implemented. In particular, the correct wearing of a mouth nose protection (mask) provides good protection against the spread of SARS-CoV-2 viruses by pre- and asymptomatic persons. It is therefore retained, even at the seat for all years from Year 1 on.

Procedure

The procedure of the ABIT starts on the day after a student/parents inform the school that they have been tested positive in a PCR or self-test. In this case, the entire class/study group needs to test itself daily (for a maximum of five school days). In addition, the students are encouraged to observe any increase in infection symptoms. If a PCR test does not confirm a positive self-test, the ABIT ends, and the regular test mode comes back into force.

If a positive PCR result confirms a self-test, ABIT continues for five days.

Vaccinated or recovered students also participate in the ABIT.

Students with a positive test during the ABIT will take the same measures instead of the usual steps (segregation, notification to the health office, etc.). In this case, ABIT will be continued for five school days after the last case has occurred, provided that the Health Authorities do not issue any other instructions.

All other students with a negative self-test result continue to go to school.

ABIT applies to all schools.

There is no need to test on school-free days (including weekends).

Tasks/Duties

Parents/Students

- ➔ Carefully execute the self-tests within the framework of ABIT.
- ➔ Inform the school and the Health Department in case of a positive self-test and a positive PCR test.
- ➔ All students (including vaccinated and recovered), subject to the ABIT and with symptoms suggestive of SARS-CoV-2 infection, should refrain from attending school.
- ➔ For the time of the ABIT, the students (including vaccinated and recovered) carry out self-monitoring of symptoms.

School/School Management

- ➔ The school informs the Health Department about a positive case and the steps taken.
- ➔ The school initiates the ABIT and provides the tests.
- ➔ Should further infections/cases occur in connection with the index person, the health authority must be informed immediately.

Health Authorities

- ➔ The Health Department provides advice to the school.
- ➔ Even if several students had a positive test, learning in the classroom is possible under the ABIT regime for all negatively tested and symptom-free students. For this purpose, the health authority consults with the school and, if necessary, initiates further measures of outbreak management. Independently of ABIT, the Health Department identifies close contacts in the family and social environment of the index person.
- ➔ The Health Authorities issue quarantine orders for all identified close contacts according to the RKI recommendations. The Health Authorities may decide about the status as close contact and send a student in isolation, and the ABIT regulation does not come into effect.

Classmates included in the ABIT but without a segregation decision of the Health Department and any disease symptoms can participate in activities outside of school.

Best regards,



Anne Köneke